

HIEA 111: The Japanese Archipelago Before Modern Times

Meetings: Center Hall, 214, Tuesday and Thursday, 2:00-3:20

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Office Hours and Location: Scheduled times TBA. Also by Appointment

“Map is not territory’—but maps are all we possess”

Jonathon Z. Smith

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is concerned with the history of the Japanese archipelago prior to the modern era. We will examine interrelationships between artistic, intellectual, social, political, economic and technological processes and structures, from the earliest known accounts of human beings in what is now Japan to the Meiji Restoration in 1868. In so doing we will be reading and analyzing a wide variety of texts, from mythology and *nō* plays to standard historical narratives and other scholarly works. I also plan to screen relevant films.

We will particularly focus on the alterity of non-modern societies vis-à-vis our own society or societies, including that of modern Japan. Accordingly we will spend a great deal of time examining religion and religiosities. What we retrospectively call religion has much to do with the way inhabitants of the Japanese archipelago before the modern era made sense of their universe. What we call myth, ritual, and religion formed much of the basis for ways that particular individuals and collectivities structured their lives. Another focus will be upon the way that the past may have differed significantly from orthodox, conventional understandings of it, whether such understandings have been engendered through “commonsensical” academic historiography or popular culture. We will spend considerable time examining heterogeneous complexities of non-modern social, political, and economic structures and processes that belie relatively simple-minded conceptualizations of the past, especially those which suggest that social formations of the Japanese archipelago before the modern era were versions of the modern Japanese nation-state in undeveloped, child-like, or embryonic forms.

On the deepest and most significant level, this course is not only concerned with history defined as the way things actually were in previous times. We will also attempt to examine various lenses or filters through which we know the past. Because history as we understand it is largely a product of the modern era and its concerns this course is about modernity as much as it is about what precedes it. As the historian of religion Jonathon Z. Smith suggested, we cannot confuse maps with the territory that they purportedly

represent, but we cannot escape the fact that in many ways maps are all we have. In other words, none of us will ever visit Japan in the distant past (territory). We will not feel, smell, taste, hear, or otherwise experience it in its material actuality. We can only know it through documents, archeological data, and the narratives of historians (maps).

Even the way that historical documents or primary sources are selected, arranged, emphasized, interpreted and perhaps translated has much to do with the choices, desires, inclinations, limitations, prejudices and needs of individuals and institutions that have produced the past and history as we know it relatively very, very recently. Despite claims otherwise people who render the past for us in such ways are—consciously or unconsciously—never disinterested—and I, by the way, am not disinterested either. Taking this into account, we will be attempting to understand why and how individuals and institutions shape the history we generally know. We will also investigate what is at stake for us in the ongoing construction and dissemination of certain “maps” of the past, both the past of what we call Japan and the past more generally.

READINGS

- The course has one textbook, Pierre François Souyri, Käthe Roth, trans., *The World Turned Upside Down* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), which is available at Groundworks Books at the UCSD Student Center, 858-534-2311.
- All other reading materials are in the course reader (in two volumes), which is available at Postal Plus Copy Shop, 4130 La Jolla Village Drive (next to the Marriot Hotel, Regents Square), 858-452-9933 / info@postalplusucsd.com.
- Two copies of the reader will be on reserve at the library, along with at least one copy of *The World Turned Upside Down*.
- Because this course is structured around a wide variety of diverse readings instead of a general text, lectures will be the glue that holds the course together, making it a coherent whole.
- **You must keep up with the readings.** Information and views presented in readings and lectures will seldom precisely overlap. Readings and lectures will often not directly coincide at all. Nevertheless, lectures will frequently help you to better interpret the readings and vice versa. I will also try to help you understand how to read certain texts.
- I recommend that you bring the appropriate volume of the reader to each meeting, because I will occasionally make reference to readings during lectures.
- Just because a reading is assigned, do not assume that it represents either the absolute truth, or information and views that I agree with. Read everything critically.

GRADING

- A midterm essay (probably 5-7 pages) and a final essay (probably 7-11 pages) will determine grades. Both will be in response to assigned prompts.
- **Midterm essays will account for 40% of your grade and final essays will count for 60% of your grade.**

- **Midterm essays are due on Thursday, 2/9/2006 at the beginning of class. Final essays are due in 214 Center Hall on Thursday, 3/23/2006, between 3:00 PM and 6:00 PM.**
- Technically, we will not grade your work on the basis of the quality of your writing. But the way that you express ideas is integrally related to the content of those ideas. You need to be able to write in such a way that those grading your papers can understand what you mean.
- Essays receiving average grades or better will demonstrate significant knowledge of material presented in readings and lectures.
- Essays receiving better than average grades will demonstrate nuanced, creative, and/or critical thinking.

PARTICIPATION

- Despite the large size of the class I will encourage discussion.
- Although no percentage of your grade will be formally determined by participation, if for example you significantly participate in discussions and/or come to office hours in order to discuss the course, it may help your grade in borderline cases. Such forms of participation indicate time and effort that you invest in the course.
- I encourage you to ask questions during course meetings—or if you are extremely shy, before or after class, or during office hours—including questions regarding the clarification of terms and concepts (**including Japanese terms**) from readings and lectures.

GROUND RULES

- **I WILL NOT ACCEPT ANY LATE PAPERS!!!!**
- **IF YOU DO NOT TURN IN EACH ASSIGNMENT ON TIME YOU WILL FAIL THE COURSE!!!!**
- **Attendance is absolutely required for every course meeting.**
- **I will never accept any assignments via email, nor will I distribute by email syllabi, essay prompts, or other materials provided in class.**
- **I am not responsible for receiving your email and you cannot assume that I have received information unless I confirm it.**
- **If you do not turn in assignments directly to me you cannot assume that I received them unless you receive confirmation from me.**
- **GERALD IGUCHI RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MAKE CHANGES TO THE SYLLABUS / SCHEDULE AT ANY TIME. If you do not attend each meeting, you may miss information regarding such changes.**

READING / LECTURE SCHEDULE

Part I: Introduction

Week One

Tuesday, 1/10: Introduction and Ground Rules

No Reading

Thursday, 1/12: The Alterity of Old Times in Non-Modern Japan, and Questioning Origins

Reading: Stefan Tanaka, "Times, Past, History" from *New Times in Modern Japan*, pp. 1-26; Kodansha International, "History of Japan: Overview," pp. 72-79; Nippon Steel Corporation, "History" in *Nippon: The Land and its People*, 39-47; Ann Walthall, "Prehistory" and "Early State and Society (to 794)," from *Japan: A Cultural, Social, and Political History*, pp. 1-29.

Part II: Prehistoric Times, Asuka, Nara, and Heian Periods

Week Two

Tuesday, 1/17: Prehistories / Early Literate Japan

Reading: William Wayne Farris, "The Lost Realm of Yamatai" and "Ancient Japan's Korean Connection," from *Sacred Texts and Buried Treasures: Issues in the Historical Archeology of Japan*, pp. 9-122.

Thursday, 1/19: History as Myth or Myth as History?

"Preface," "Introduction," and "The Age of Gods" from the W. G. Aston translation of *Nihongi* (from page with roman numeral V to page 108); Allan Grapard, "Visions of Excess and Excesses of Vision: Women and Transgression in Japanese Myth."

Week Three

Tuesday, 1/24: The Heian Heyday

Reading: "Akashi" from *Tale of Genji* (Seidensticker trans.), pp. 279-315, Walthall, "Heian Japan," from *Japan: A Cultural, Social, and Political History*, pp. 30-45.

Film: Selections from "Otogi Zōshi."

Thursday, 1/26: Ends of Imperial Rule

Reading: Karl Friday, "Teeth and Claws. Provincial Warriors and the Heian Court"; Allan Grapard, "Institution, Ritual, and Ideology: The Twenty-Two Shrine-Temple Multiplexes of Heian Japan."

Part IV: Medieval Japan

Week Four

Tuesday, 1/31: Introduction to Medieval Japan / Medieval? What Medieval?

Reading: Pierre François Souyri, pp. 1-64. Thomas Keirstead, “In Go Sanjo’s Archive: Discovering the System of the Estates” and “Hyakushō and the Rhetoric of Identity,” from *The Geography of Power in Medieval Japan*, pp. 3-45.

Thursday, 2/2: The Buddhist Reformation or the Weberian Imagination?

Reading: Robert N. Bellah, “The Contemporary Meaning of Kamakura Buddhism”; James H. Foard, “In Search of a Lost Reformation: A Reconsideration of Kamakura Buddhism,” pp. 1-31; Souyri, pp. 65-83. **MIDTERM ASSIGNMENT DISTRIBUTED.**

Week Five

Tuesday, 2/7: Karmic Kami Chameleons

Readngs: Peter Metevelis, “Shinto Shrines or Shinto Temples?” Kuroda Toshio, “Shinto in the History of Japanese Religion.”

Thursday, 2/9: “Japan” and a Genealogy of Sacred Space

Readings: Allan Grapard, “Flying Mountains & Walkers of Emptiness: Sacred Space in Japanese Religions”; Fabio Rambelli, “Religion, Ideology of Domination, and Nationalism.” **MIDTERM ASSIGNMENT DUE.**

Week Six:

Tuesday, 2/14: Getting to Nō Medieval Culture I.

Readings: “Introduction,” “Note on Komachi” and “Sotoba no Komachi,” from Arthur Waley Trans., *The Nō Plays of Japan*, pp. 15-59, 148-160; and John Walter de Gruchy, “Nō-ing the Japanese” in *Orientalizing Arthur Waley*, pp. 86-116.

Thursday, 2/16: Getting to Nō Medieval Culture II.

Readings: J. Thomas Rimer, “What More Do We Need to Know about Nō?”; Noel J. Pinnington, “Invented Origins: Muromachi Interpretations of “Okina Sarugaku””; Janet Goff, “Plays about Genji and the Akashi Lady,” in *Noh Dramas and The Tale of Genji*,

Week Seven

Tuesday, 2/21: Wild, Wild Japan

Film: “Yojimbo”

Readings: Souyri, pp. 84-180.

Thursday, 2/23: Warring States or Civil War?

Film: Selections from “a Fistful of Dollars”

Readings: Souyri, pp. 181-217.

Part V: Tokugawa Japan

Week Eight

Tuesday, 2/27: Transition to Tokugawa “Peace” / Over-Determined Hegemony

Readings: Herman Ooms, “Neo-Confucianism and the Formation of early Tokugawa Ideology: Contours of a Problem,” from *Confucianism and Tokugawa Culture*, pp. 27-61; Douglas R. Howland, “Samurai Status, class, and Bureaucracy: A Historiographical Essay.”

Thursday, 2/29: Tokugawa Culture and Everyday Life

Readings: Chieko Ariga, “The Playful Gloss: Rubi in Japanese Literature”; Louis G. Perez, “Food,” “Clothing,” and “Sex” in *Daily Life in Early Japan*, pp. 71-99 and 259-266.

Week Nine

Tuesday, 3/7: Tokugawa Tensions

Reading: Ann Walthall, “Introduction” and “The Sakura Sōgō Story” in *Peasant Uprisings in Japan*, pp. 1-75.

Thursday, 3/9: Kokugaku and Mitogaku

Readings: Motoori Norinaga et al “Preface” (vii-xvi), “Biographical Introduction,” and “The Texts of Antiquity: Clarification” in *Book 1: Kojiki-den, Motoori Norinaga*, 1-32; Victor Koschmann, “Introduction,” from *The Mito Ideology*, pp. 1-27.

Week Ten

Tuesday, 3/14: Yo Naoshi and Hokusai

BE SURE TO BRING YOUR READER TO THIS MEETING!

Readings: Royall Tyler, “The Tokugawa Peace and Popular Religion: Suzuki Shōsan, Kakugyō Tōbutsu, and Jikigyō Miroku,” in *Confucianism and Popular Culture*, pp. 92-119. Hokusai Katsushika, et al., “Introduction” and “Commentaries on Plates,” from *One Hundred Views of Mt. Fuji*, 7-22 and 193-222. Images from pages 33, 48, 54, 56-57, 90-91, 100-101, 114-115, 139, 176-177, 178-179, 180-181, 184-185, 188.

Thursday, 3/16: Bakumatsu Japan, the Meiji Restoration, and Concluding Remarks

Reading: George M. Wilson, “Epilogue: The Crowd in the Meiji Restoration,” from *Patriots and Redeemers in Japan: Motives in the Meiji Restoration*, pp. 123-131. **FINAL EXAM ASSIGNMENT DISTRIBUTED.**

FINAL EXAM SCHEDULE

Completed Final Exam Essays are due in 214 Center Hall, between 3:00 PM and 6:00 PM on Thursday, 3/23/2006.